

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### **B & W Custom Truck Beds Inc**

Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center

#### **B&W Trailer Hitches Turns Ideas into Marketable Reality with Eureka! Jump Start**

##### **Client Profile:**

B&W Trailer Hitches manufactures high quality truck beds and trailer hitches. The company employs 130 people at its facility in Humboldt, Kansas.

##### **Situation:**

B&W Trailer Hitches needed a process to turn their large menu of growth ideas into one or two products for the market. "Our new product development efforts lacked focus," said Beth Barlow, marketing manager of B&W. "We needed an organized process to work an idea all the way through to completion." B&W turned to the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help.

##### **Solution:**

MAMTC's solution was the Jomp Start program. This program helps companies create, communicate and commercialize ideas and products that lead to new business models and more profitable customers and markets. Ideas are first scientifically screened to capture those that are most likely to succeed. Then, a 30-day action plan is developed to research, test and implement those ideas, transforming them into products or processes that can help the company generate revenue or create new efficiencies. "Jump Start is geared for small and mid-sized companies, but generates business growth ideas and processes using fast-paced 'think tank' methodology that's been proven by global organizations," said Mark Chalfant, growth strategies program manager at MAMTC. After implementing the Jump Start project, B&W discovered two new product ideas that merited further development. One of these, a utility carrier, was brought to market in five months.

##### **Results:**

- \* Streamlined product development process
- \* Brought new product to market in 5 months
- \* Identified 2 promising new products

##### **Testimonial:**

"MAMTC and Jump Start showed us how important it was to bring consensus to the organization about what the top priorities were, and then agree upon one or two areas to focus on. We needed to see how other companies did it, and that's what MAMTC really helped us with. Our process is much more efficient and targeted than it used to be, so we don't end up wasting time or resources."

Beth Barlow, Marketing Manager